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"Evaluating the Reset:
Is It Time for a Pause?"

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee: Thank you for inviting me to join in today's very timely discussion. As you know, this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the collapse of the Soviet Union – a good occasion to reflect on the state of Russian-American relations.

I'd like to focus my remarks today on three questions. First, how did Russia and the United States manage to restore broadly cooperative ties after 2008? Second, why are their relations marked by lingering frustration and even friction? Third, what is the best way to address areas of tension and disagreement in the future?

Three years ago, many experts – in both countries -- believed that Russian-American relations were in for a prolonged chill. In the wake of Russian aggression against Georgia, some Washington commentators feared that Moscow's foreign policy might be entering a new phase of confrontation, even conquest. Russian forecasters claimed that the West was out to weaken (and more excitable ones said, to dismember) their country.

These expectations have been almost entirely confounded. Russia and the United States have ratified and begun to implement a new treaty on strategic arms reductions.

They have cooperated in support of NATO military operations in Afghanistan. They joined in passing a new round of sanctions against Iran in the U.N. Security Council. They have collaborated in efforts to control the proliferation of fissile materials and to limit international narcotics trafficking. Next week, the Russian foreign minister and Secretary of State Clinton will sign agreements on two contentious issues of long standing – visas and child adoptions. Even popular attitudes have seen a change. American officials like to point out that last year the percentage of Russians who had a "favorable" view of the United States reached its highest level – 60% -- in a decade and a half.

Time and again during this revival of cooperation, many knowledgeable commentators argued that the so-called "reset" had reached its high-water mark. Few further benefits, we heard, could be expected. These predictions have also not held up well. Take one recent example: when Russia abstained on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 authorizing military operations against Libya, some saw it as a sign that Moscow would not work with the West in responding to the Arab Spring. Soon enough, however, President Medvedev joined his G-8 colleagues in announcing that it was time for Colonel Qadhafi to go. When I was in Moscow last month, Russian officials actually asked me why NATO's Operation Unified Protector was taking so long to achieve its aims.

In expanding their cooperation the two sides, of course, have focused on issues where the practical benefits for both are most clear-cut. For obvious reasons, both Russia and the U.S. like the predictability of drawing down strategic forces by agreement. Both see Iran's nuclear program – and the prospect of state-failure in Afghanistan – as

destabilizing. But the fact that the shared benefits of cooperation are obvious does not make them any less real. States do not always act in their own interest. Here, at least, they are doing so. (Other governments have been less cooperative: China, The New York Times recently reported, does not allow its territory to be used to supply NATO operations in Afghanistan.) There are also some tentative signs of Russian readiness to re-think what is in its interest, even when the result is costly. Real money was lost when Moscow canceled the sale of an advanced air-defense system to Iran.

The "reset" has served American interests in important ways. Why, then, do so many have such mixed feelings about it? Many – in both countries -- are clearly hesitant about taking the next steps that seem to be on the agenda. In the U.S., there is real ambivalence about "graduating" Russia from the coverage of the Jackson-Vanik amendment. And this, even though the problem that the amendment was designed to address – the denial of free emigration to Soviet Jews – long ago ceased to exist. In Russia, there is a similar ambivalence about working with NATO to develop an overlapping system of missile defense – even though the nuclear competition of the Cold War is also long since over.

Many observers treat such attitudes as proof that neither country has shaken the legacy of the Cold War. There is perhaps something to this explanation, but to my mind it is not the principal factor. The next steps of the "reset" – whether we're talking about Jackson-Vanik "graduation" or about cooperative missile defense – are simply hard. They require a level of mutual respect and trust that Russia and the U.S. have not developed – and for understandable reasons.

Russia's domestic evolution since the Soviet collapse has been deeply disappointing, to many of its own citizens and to its friends abroad. Its own president complains of human rights abuses, corruption, and lack of real political competition. All of these, he says (with admirable honesty), will stunt the country's economic development and global standing unless they are corrected. He is absolutely right, and most of his critics make these charges far more emphatically than he does. It is not surprising, then, that other post-Communist nations -- those that have embraced and institutionalized democratic norms more fully than Russia – also enjoy greater international respect. Nor is it surprising that members of Congress, seeing these trends, hesitate to close the book on a piece of legislation that has for decades embodied American human rights concerns.

Madam Chairman, the Russian national security establishment has its own hesitations about next steps in the "reset," and these too are understandable. It has resisted the idea of working with NATO on a common approach to missile defense. Here the influence of "old thinking" is undoubted. The Russian military was for years untouched by reform and new ideas, and many of its arguments against missile defense cooperation are absurd. But Cold War nostalgia is not the only thing holding it back. Even close allies have great difficulty sharing information and plans that could affect their ultimate security. And Russia and NATO are by no means close allies. Only a little distrust is needed to make cooperation in such a sensitive area seem impractical and undesirable.

Given these obstacles to cooperation, what is the best way to handle the next phase of the "reset?" The title of today's hearing raises the idea of a "pause." I might

note that some members of the Russian Duma, especially its communists and nationalists, also like this idea. But it is not the right approach. It does not serve American interests to put on hold the very real cooperation that has been developed over the past two – indeed, the past twenty – years, by presidents of both parties. Our troops in Afghanistan don't want a "pause." Our New START treaty inspectors don't want a "pause." The NATO ambassadors who traveled from Brussels to Sochi this week to meet with President Medvedev to discuss expanded cooperation also seem to think their work is worth continuing.

We need to carry forward the "reset" without pretending that Russia and the United States have attained a greater degree of mutual trust and respect than they have. The "reset" was born of realism about the two sides' interests and values alike. To keep this policy on a realistic footing in the future, we will have to develop relations step by step.

Let me close with a word about how each side might put this approach into practice. Congress is, for good reason, uncomfortable about "graduating" Russia from Jackson-Vanik unless the United States continues to have a clearly articulated policy toward human rights and democracy in Russia. It should therefore seriously explore legislation that can take the amendment's place. There are many ways to modernize our efforts to support democratic development. Members of both Houses, including Senator Cardin and Representative McGovern, have proposed legislation focused on the worst abuses by individual Russian officials. Appropriately configured and with an eye to future abuses, such measures can strengthen American policy. And they need not be the

end of the story. Congress might also aim to increase support for civil-society groups, for electoral monitoring, and so forth.

Similarly, if Russia does not want to enter into a full-blown cooperative missile defense system, more tentative and exploratory ventures are also available to it. Administration officials have publicly suggested that the best way for Russian policymakers, strategic planners and military officers to understand the pluses and minuses of greater cooperation is to "get inside the tent." This is surely good advice, and there are many ways to follow it. President Clinton and President Putin signed an agreement back in 2000 to create a Joint Data Exchange Center -- a clearing-house in which to trade early-warning information on missile launches. Eleven years later, this goal is still waiting to be implemented.

Madam Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you, with members of the committee, and with the distinguished witnesses attending today's hearing. Thank you.

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3. Date of Committee hearing: July 7, 2011	
4. Have <u>you</u> received any Federal grants or contracts (including any subgrants and subcontracts) since October 1, 2008 related to the subject on which you have been invited to testify? ☐ Yes ☒ No	**5. Have any of the <u>organizations you are representing</u> received any Federal grants or contracts (including any subgrants and subcontracts) since October 1, 2008 related to the subject on which you have been invited to testify?** ☐ Yes ☒ No
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